

add additional, unrelated pieces of their wish list, everything from handouts to labor bosses to money for a U.N. climate slush fund.

We were in the process of stripping out these partisan provisions through the conference committee that was appointed by the House and the Senate when Senator SCHUMER made a big decision. He said that Democrats were likely to bring to the floor another reckless tax-and-spending bill like Build Back Better, although in a different version. Our Democratic colleagues got the bright idea that they wanted to revive something like the Green New Deal, increase taxes on working families, and give runaway inflation even more staying power.

Well, Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, and Members of the Republican conference thought that was a bad idea and said that there would not be a bipartisan conference bill and a partisan, reckless tax-and-spending spree bill. It wasn't a threat; it was just a statement of fact. There is no such thing as negotiating with our Senate colleagues on the Democratic side while they sit on the sidelines drafting partisan legislation.

The provisions negotiated out of the bipartisan bill wouldn't land in the trash; they would simply be recycled through a partisan reconciliation bill. But Senator MANCHIN, the Senator from West Virginia, put an end to that last week when he killed the bill that would increase taxes on families and small businesses and implement costly Green New Deal climate policies. In my book, that is a big win for the American people, who are already facing high prices at grocery stores and at the filling station.

With this reckless tax-and-spending spree reconciliation bill dead and buried, there is now an opening to do something that we can agree upon on a bipartisan basis. I spent the weekend talking with a number of our colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, and I am cautiously optimistic that we can now proceed to a vote on the USICA bill or some version of it. Based on our discussions, it sounds like the majority leader will bring a narrower bill to the floor that focuses on chips funding—again, something that has been pending now for more than 2 years—as well as tax incentives for manufacturers.

This bill will not be USICA, though, and it won't be "Endless Frontier," which was the name of the bill when it was initially introduced, and it sounds like a far cry from the COMPETES Act, which was the House's partisan response; rather, from all reports, it focuses on the core issue of reshoring American semiconductor manufacturing here in the United States.

With COVID-19, we became aware of a lot of supply chain vulnerabilities that I think we just, frankly, were not aware of. It is one thing to be aware of a supply chain for things like toys or consumer items, but it is another to be

dependent on a supply chain—a foreign supply chain—for something as critical to our way of life and our economy and our national security as advanced semiconductors.

What Senator WARNER and I initially proposed and what I hope we will be voting on this week provides market-based incentives to close the cost gap between manufacturing overseas in places like Taiwan and doing so here in the United States. According to a Taiwan semiconductor manufacturing company located in Taipei, they figure it costs about 30 percent less to manufacture these high-end semiconductors in Taiwan than it does in the United States.

If we are going to get some of that manufacturing capacity back here to the United States to protect us against potential blockades, whether it comes from a military conflict or a pandemic or a natural disaster, we are going to have to find a way to provide incentives for those manufacturing, fabrication facilities to be located here in the United States. That is what we are talking about.

There is a closing window of opportunity for us to act. Secretary Raimondo, the Secretary of Commerce in the Biden administration, has made clear, as have various CEOs of semiconductor companies, that if the United States does not act soon, they will have to make a business decision to locate their manufacturing facilities in other places in the world where those incentives are already provided. But it does nothing to protect the U.S. economy or national security to have another fab or manufacturing facility located somewhere else around the world. We need them here in the United States if we are going to protect our economy and guard against those national security threats.

So if we don't make a decision soon—and I am talking about in the next couple of weeks—then we can kiss those manufacturing facilities goodbye, and places like Texas, Ohio, Arizona, and other States around the country that might benefit from that construction and the high-paying jobs that go along with them will see them taken to Europe or somewhere else.

Well, even though the Senator from West Virginia said he would not support the reckless tax-and-spending portion of the reconciliation bill, it is possible our colleagues will move forward with a slimmed-down version of an already-slimmed-down reconciliation bill that would require the Federal Government to set a price for drugs covered by Medicare—a move which I believe will stifle innovation. Price fixing always results in scarcity, meaning consumers—particularly seniors—will have less access to choice. It would also extend ObamaCare subsidies for insurance companies and prop up the struggling healthcare marketplace.

It is clear that I oppose those provisions and the perennial effort to legislate on a partisan basis, but the truth

is, if the Democrats have 50 votes plus the Vice President, they can pass it notwithstanding Republican opposition. We all understand that. But given the fact that these horrific tax increases are off the table as a result of the announcement from the senior Senator from West Virginia, I believe we are in a posture where we can go forward with the chips funding and other related provisions, and I hope we will be able to take action on that in the coming days.

BORDER SECURITY

Madam President, on another matter, last week, Senator CRUZ, my junior Senator and friend, and I took five Members of our Republican conference to McAllen, TX, which is in the Rio Grande Valley, which is the epicenter of a massive humanitarian and immigration crisis that has been going on for at least the last year and a half.

McAllen is in the Border Patrol's Rio Grande Valley Sector, it is called, and one of the busiest portions of the U.S.-Mexico border when it comes to illegal migration. For example, between October and May, Rio Grande Valley Sector agents logged more than 333,000 border crossings—more than any of the other 20 Border Patrol sectors.

During the visit, our colleagues were able to see and learn what, frankly, as Texas Senators, Senator CRUZ and I learned long ago about the traumatic, heart-wrenching consequences of this unabated crisis: groups of migrants with toddlers, who were lying asleep on the dirt road, practically ill from the heat and exhaustion.

By the way, the temperature is routinely in excess of 100 degrees at this time of year.

One mother and her 7-year-old child, the mom in tears and heartbroken, having left another 10-year-old child behind in Guatemala, were encountered. Unaccompanied children of 7 years of age, with nothing more than the clothes on their back, a birth certificate, and family contact information on a piece of paper—these were the sorts of things that my Senate colleagues had a chance to experience, which, unfortunately, I have seen all too many times before. These aren't heart-wrenching scenes from a war-torn country halfway around the world. This is happening on our front doorstep. This is happening in Texas every day.

My colleagues and I also spoke with some of the folks whose homes and properties sit along the U.S.-Texas border with Mexico. They shared with us stories about what it is like to live along one of the hot spots for illegal border crossings.

One resident told us last year the Brooks County Sheriff's Department recovered the bodies of 119 dead migrants. So far this year, the county has recovered 64.

Just by way of explanation, the coyotes or the smugglers will bring the migrants across the border, put them in a stash house, and then, when they

believe the coast is clear, put them in a truck and transport them north. They will have to go through a border checkpoint—or an interior checkpoint in Falfurrias, for example, which is where Brooks County is located, but what happens is, the smugglers will tell the migrants: Get out of the vehicle and walk around the checkpoint, and we will pick you up on the north side.

The problem is, this is very tough terrain and over 100-degree-plus temperature. Frankly, when some of the migrants become ill or injured, they are simply left behind to die, and that is why so many bodies have been recovered, for example, in Brooks County on a regular basis.

It is tough to imagine the toll this sort of discovery takes on a farmer or rancher, and then multiply that shock by more than 100.

Then we heard about the losses to property suffered because of this crisis—stolen vehicles, broken fences, damaged crops, vandalism, people who are afraid to let their own family members live and work on their own property because they are worried about the drugs, and they are worried about the potential violence. They talked about the safety concerns for their families and employees because drug traffickers and human smugglers go right through their backyards.

These men and women are understandably angry. They said to us: This is the United States of America, and I can't let my daughter or wife or children live and play or work on our own property? They are frustrated beyond belief because their families and employees, their homes and livelihoods are in jeopardy due to the Biden administration's failed border policies.

In case there are any doubts, I want to emphasize that what is happening on the border right now does not benefit anyone.

Border Patrol agents are stretched thin. They are frustrated. They are overwhelmed by everything they are expected to shoulder. They have been told they cannot do the job that they took an oath to perform under policies by the Department of Homeland Security, which can only be described as nonenforcement policies.

Landowners are saddled with safety concerns and financial losses.

Nongovernmental organizations, which are doing their best to help people in need, are carrying the weight of this humanitarian crisis with no end in sight. Brave Texas Department of Public Safety officers and National Guardsmen are making serious sacrifices as a result of the administration's failure to secure the border. These guardsmen and the Department of Homeland Security should not have to do a job that is the responsibility of the Federal Government, but when the Federal Government won't do its job, the State of Texas has no choice. One guardsman actually drowned while trying to save two migrants struggling to

swim across the Rio Grande River. And the migrants themselves are routinely abused, exploited, even raped and sometimes left for dead in the middle of unforgiving terrain.

The only people really winning in this crisis are the criminal organizations and the human smugglers that are getting richer by the day. These cartels are transnational criminal organizations. They will traffic in anything that makes them a buck. They are what one person has called commodity agnostic. They don't care what that commodity is; their goal is simply to maximize their profit by whatever means necessary. And there is no question that the Biden administration's policies have helped enrich the cartels and resulted in too many migrants having lost their lives.

Throughout my time in the Senate, I have had the privilege of working with countless men and women who live and work along the southern border. Their experiences and input have shed light on the scope and scale of this crisis, and I am glad to be able to welcome some of our Senate colleagues to join us for an informative trip to the Rio Grande Valley. And I appreciate our colleagues taking the time to come visit the US-Mexico border for an update on the border crisis. Of course, most of them don't come from border States, but in the memorable words of one of our colleagues now, every State is a border State because the consequences of this huge migration and humanitarian crisis—not to mention the drugs that are smuggled across the border—affect every community and every State in our Nation.

I also want to thank my constituents, my fellow Texans, who took the time out of their busy schedules to educate our colleagues: the officers, the agents, the landowners, the National Guardsmen, the Texas Department of Public Safety officials, the local sheriffs, and others.

What is so shocking to me is, despite the complete security breakdown and, really, the lack of any dispute about what exactly is happening on the border, we just can't seem to get the Biden administration's attention. Landowners can tell them what it was like to discover the dead bodies of migrants who were abandoned by human smugglers, and those who do the Lord's work at nongovernmental organizations can tell the tale of migrants who were violently assaulted and raped on the way to our country, some of whom arrived pregnant. If President Biden would take a moment to sit down with these folks who live and work along the border, he may begin to learn more and view this situation for what it really is: a humanitarian and security crisis precipitated by his administration's unwillingness to secure our border.

President Biden has an open invitation to visit the Texas border, and I hope he will take us up on that. If he would, we might finally be able to get

something done on a bipartisan basis to abate this crisis and to secure our open borders.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

THE ECONOMY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, when we look back at the many failures of the Biden administration, what I believe is going to stand out is really their commitment to doing things that sound good to other Washington Democrats but really are not serving the people well. In fact, after spending another weekend working with local leaders back in Tennessee, I will take it one step further and say that all Joe Biden and the Democrats have managed to do is find new ways to frighten we, the people.

Yes, indeed, they are afraid of what this administration is going to do next because everything the White House has done over the past 18 months seems to make their lives worse each and every day. And the thing that is so interesting, as I talk to Tennesseans, this is something where there is bipartisan agreement, whether it is crime in the streets or the drug situation—much of that caused by this open border that is out of control—inflation, the price at the pump, the price at the grocery store. It is quite a stunning record on how to make the lives of the American people worse.

Joe Biden and the Democrats have spent us into 9.1 percent inflation, and now, they want to tax us into a recession. The latest scheme is terrifying. Democrats are proposing a trillion dollars in new tax increases. This includes a crippling new tax on small businesses as well as a tax increase on low- and middle-income Americans, which, if you recall, is something that President Biden said he would never do.

The Democrats are prepared to push the economy off a cliff on behalf of a radical and radically unpopular agenda that the American people have repeatedly said they did not vote for and they do not want. According to recent polling by the New York Times, 77 percent of Americans believe that the country is heading in the wrong direction, and only 33 percent of Americans approve of the way Joe Biden is doing his job. If that is not an indictment of this latest inflationary spending spree, I do not know what is.

The American people understand that one man and one party are in full control of the Federal Government and that Joe Biden and the Democrats are responsible for the uncertainty and fear that is now driving their decisions. Thank God Tennessee has strong, smart local and State leaders who take their jobs seriously, who work hard every day to represent the people of our great State.

I am about to wrap up my annual 95-county tour, and I can tell you that none of the county mayors and city managers that I have spoken to are worried about methane or proper pronoun usage. They just want to know